

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please AMEND the claims in accordance with the following:

1. (Currently Amended) A tele-inventory system for counting the number of commodities and/or checking the expiration dates of the commodities for inventorying various kinds of commodities in a shop by ~~an~~ a human operator from a remote management apparatus that is installed remotely from the shop, comprising:

at the shop

camera means for taking images of object commodities to be inventoried;

image-transmitter means for transmitting said taken images of the object commodities to the remote management apparatus;

at the remote management apparatus

image-receiver means for receiving said taken images of the object commodities from said image-transmitter means; and

display means for displaying said taken images of the object commodities which images have been received by said image-receiver means;

pointer means for pointing by the human operator the individual object commodity in said taken images of the object commodities which images have been displayed on said display means;

marker means for selectively labeling said taken image of the individual object commodity, which image has been pointed by said ~~pointing device~~ pointer means, with either one of a predetermined mark and a special mark other than the predetermined mark; and

counter means for counting the number of images of the object commodities which have been labeled with the predetermined marks by said marker means, whereby the human operator is able to make an inventory of the object commodities at the remote management apparatus.

2. (Currently Amended) A tele-inventory system according to claim 1, further comprising:

at the remote management apparatus

instruction-transmitter means for transmitting instructions of the human operator to the shop; and

at the shop

instruction-receiver means for receiving said instructions of the human operator from the remote management apparatus.

3. (Currently Amended) A tele-inventory system according to claim 2, further comprising:
at the shop
camera control means for controlling said camera means based on said instructions of
the human operator, which have been received by said instruction-receiver means.

4. (Currently Amended) A tele-inventory system according to claim 3, further comprising:
at the shop
manipulator means for manipulating a posture and a position of the individual object
commodity; and
manipulator controlling means for controlling said manipulator means based on said
instructions of the human operator, which have been received by said instruction-receiver
means.

5. (Original) A tele-inventory system according to claim 3, further comprising:
at the shop
a database for previously storing commodity information about a correlation between the
individual object commodity and position information about a position of the individual object
commodity; and
said camera control means being operable, based on said instructions received by said
instruction-receiver means, to read, from said database, commodity information with respect to
the individual object commodity contained in said instructions, and to control said camera means
in such a manner that said camera means takes an image of the last-named individual object
commodity.

6. (Cancelled)

7. (Cancelled)

8. (Cancelled)

9. (Currently Amended) A tele-inventory system according to claim 2, further comprising:
at the shop
in-shop display means for displaying a marked image, which is the image labeled with

said either one of a predetermined mark and a special mark other than the predetermined mark by said marker means and which has been received together with instructions of the human operator by said instruction-receiver means of the shop from said instruction-transmitter means of the remote management apparatus, so that a sales clerk of the shop sees said marked image to make arrangements for various processes based on the last-named instructions of the human operator.

10. (Original) A tele-inventory system according to claim 1, wherein said camera means serves also as a security camera, which is usually previously installed in the shop.

11. (Currently Amended) A tele-inventory system according to claim 1, wherein the remote management apparatus is a mobile information processing terminal to be operated by the human operator.

12. (Original) A tele-inventory system according to claim 1, wherein the remote management apparatus is installed at a remote place in a different time zone from the time zone of a shop place where the shop is located.

13. (Original) A tele-inventory system according to claim 5, wherein:

said image-transmitter means and said instruction-receiving means are communicably connected to a plurality of customer information terminals to be operated by individual customers of the shop;

upon receipt of a direction containing the name of a target commodity from the individual customer information terminal,

at the shop

said camera control means reads, from said database, commodity information with respect to the individual object commodity corresponding to the target commodity contained in the direction of the individual customer based on the direction, and controls said camera means in such a manner that said camera means takes an image of the target commodity; and

said image-transmitter means transmits the last-named taken image of the target commodity taken by said camera means to the last-named customer information terminal.

14. (Cancelled)

15. (Cancelled)

16. (Cancelled)

17. (Cancelled)

18. (Cancelled)

19. (Cancelled)

20. (Cancelled)

21. (Cancelled)

22. (Cancelled)

23. (Cancelled)

24. (Previously Presented) A method for conducting inventory, comprising:
imaging an item; and
remotely conducting inventory of the item based on said imaging.

25. (Currently Amended) A tele-inventory system for counting the number of commodities and/or checking the expiration dates of the commodities for inventorying various kinds of commodities in a shop by ~~an~~ a human operator from a remote management apparatus that is installed remotely from the shop, comprising:

at the shop

a camera taking images of object commodities to be inventoried;

an image-transmitter transmitting said taken images of the object commodities to the remote management apparatus;

at the remote management apparatus

an image-receiver receiving said taken images of the object commodities from said image-transmitter means;

a display displaying said taken images of the object commodities which images have

been received by said image-receiver;

a pointer pointing by the human operator the individual object commodity in said taken images of the object commodities which images have been displayed on said display;

a marker for selectively labeling said taken image of the individual object commodity, which image has been pointed by said pointer pointing device, with either one of a predetermined mark and a special mark other than the predetermined mark; and

a counter for counting the number of images of the object commodities which have been labeled with the predetermined marks by said marker, whereby the human operator is able to make an inventory of the object commodities at the remote management apparatus.